

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Cancelled)

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2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of allowing said software component to access an external environment only through said output port.

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3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of allowing a client to access said software component only through said input port.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for programming a software component, said method comprising the steps of:

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defining properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

providing a software mechanism for instantiating said software component; and

utilizing an attach command executed by a processor to attach at least one of said at least one input port to a class.

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5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

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7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

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9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 12, wherein said processor is further configured to allow said software component to access an external environment only through said output port.

5           11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 12, wherein said processor is further configured to allow a client to access said software component only through said input port.

10           12. (Previously Presented) A system for programming a software component, said system comprising:

          a memory that stores computer-readable code; and

          a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to implement said computer-readable code, said computer-readable code configured to:

15           define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

          provide a software mechanism for instantiating said software component;

and

          utilize an attach command to attach at least one of said at least one input port to a class.

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13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

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15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

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18. (Previously Presented) An article of manufacture for programming a software component, said system comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

5 a step to define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

a step to provide a software mechanism for instantiating said software component; and

10 a step to utilize an attach command to attach at least one of said at least one input port to a class.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

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